

Chapter One

Sharing and Stimulating the Documentation of Educational ICTs.

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Educational ICTs at the University of Jos documents the efforts of a Nigerian Higher Education Institution (HEI) to use Technology for Teaching (TfT) and learning over the last fifteen years. The book tries to showcase how the Jos Carnegie Partnership (JCP) and the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA) have strengthened UniJos in the specific area of educational ICTs. In sharing the experiences of one university with others, the authors hope to stimulate Nigerian HEIs to document educational ICT activities and share experiences. This is one way of contributing to the development of ICTs at Nigerian HEIs. It is the spirit of “The history of ICT at the University of Jos” published by Fab Educational Books Nigeria, 2006.

The second chapter of the book, “Contextualising Educational ICTs at the University of Jos” puts in perspective, the rise of the University to the status of a leader in ICT in the Nigerian University System (NUS). In it, Richard Akinola and Lennox Liverpool, discuss the use of a tradition of innovation and partnership to accomplish strategic ICT goals. In doing so, they document, among other gains, the successes of an internship program training thousands of Cisco graduates for the Nigerian ICT sector. The chapter ends with insights into how Nigerian HEIs are preparing scholars to contribute to the global marketplace of ideas using ICT.

“Technology for Learning and Teaching Mathematics,” the third chapter, demonstrates that measuring the impact of eLearning is taking root at the university. Joshua Chollom, Lennox Liverpool and Musa Marut, present highlights of developments, in an eight-year, multi-sponsor funded eLearning initiative. Students nurtured in traditional forms of learning and currently in a resource starved educational environment are introduced to blended eLearning. Novel class activities including interactive teaching, video group activities, on-line tests, and discussion forums, as well as the activities of a student leadership caucus complement other strategies. Through discussion of this initiative, the authors spotlight challenges of teaching with technology in the Nigerian environment. The chapter details perceptions, experiences and realities and demonstrates how to create local solutions to local problems. It highlights the unintended results of stimulating an eLearning strategy and

an eLearning fellowship. Some reports on this intervention appear in Megan Lindow's *Weaving Success; Voices of Change in African Higher Education* published by the Institute of international education, New York, 2011.

The fourth chapter of Educational ICTs at the University of Jos is by Tanko Ishaya. In it, Tanko Ishaya traces the development of the eLearning strategy at the University of Jos as a framework for creating innovative and sustainable teaching and learning initiatives. A framework that does so, through an effective adoption and use of ICT with an evaluation of its implementation. The chapter includes snippets of the history of ICT at Jos, mapping out an ICT policy development, as the core infrastructural base that guided the development of the eLearning strategy. The author presents an evaluation of the strategy from different perspectives including an analysis of the activities of the deployed Learning Management System (LMS). The chapter concludes by discussing some of the lessons learnt, and proposing a way forward.

The University established an eLearning Fellowship to help scale-up the skill base of academics to use technology for research, learning, and teaching. The goal is to form a nucleus and grow a community of practice in eLearning. In the fifth chapter, "the eFellowship Program: Developing Champions for Cascading ICT Integration Skills", Jerome Dooga examines the operations and potentials of the program as a viable model for providing functional staff training in eLearning.

The technology for teaching community at UniJos appreciates that libraries and librarians are critical in educational ICTs. Libraries complement physical and human resources, from computer access to support for creating and using Open Educational Resources (OERs). In the sixth chapter of the book, Stephen Akintunde, discusses how the University library is doing so, by exploring, the structure of the library and its services, as well as library infrastructure and access to library resources.

"Understanding and Using Open Education Resources" by Jerome Dooga, is the seventh chapter of Educational ICTs at the University of Jos. It discusses the uptake of OERs at the University. It shares the first steps in using open resources and the progress that has been made since. This is all framed around the broader picture of the concept of OERs, its history, motivation, philosophy, purpose and practice within academia.

Teaching with technology imposes new challenges on Nigerian HEIs. On such challenge is to create an ideal environment for teaching and learning in a resource starved environment. Setting up an interactive laboratory was therefore a unique experience in many ways. When one was set up, it served the dual role of lab and meeting place for the faculty and

departmental boards. Sunday Adewumi and Joshua Chollom in the eighth chapter of the book discuss how to set up such a lab, control the abuse of facilities as well as how to protect users' interests for a pleasurable lab experience. The chapter looks at facilities and tools such as power supply, cabling, and security arrangements. When users know what to do and what not to do with the infrastructure provided, the chances for a good lab experience are significantly increased for optimal benefit.

In chapter nine, Jerome Dooga looks at more recent developments in the use of technology for teaching in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts. The chapter highlights the initial challenges that were faced and how they were overcome. More important, it highlights how technology can enhance the learners' understanding of abstract concepts.

ICT supports research, teaching and learning. It also supports administration in every arm of the university, from Bursary and Registry to Physical Facilities and Student Affairs. In chapter ten, Geraldine Daloeng, Olayinka Oyerinde and Silas Vem, tell how a Student Information System developed and how it is used to make the university experience of UniJos students a more pleasurable one.

Chapter eleven is the final chapter of the book. In it, Jerome Dooga and Lennox Liverpool, in an emerging community of practice at the University of Jos, chart the Role of Technology in Contemporary Nigerian Higher Education and discuss issues of quality control. Quality control will arguably be the most critical issue for Educational ICTs in Nigerian Higher Education in the next decade.

This book is a means to an end. By sharing experiences we hope to stimulate many in the Nigerian Higher Education sector who do, but do not document what they do, and the many that document but do not share. We believe that many lessons can be learned from our successes and mistakes. We know that Nigerian HEIs currently need to collaborate much more for maximal growth and development. We did so in the past and we can do so again. Let us document and share the experiences of the modest gains that we are making today for unpredictable uses tomorrow. Let us collaborate to grow ICT infrastructure, support the use of ICT in our libraries, our classrooms and in administration. Let us collaborate to grow quality Nigerian local content and share with the global academic community through open educational resources.

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